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VIETNAM PUBLIC HEALTH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Beginning in 1965, the United States and Free World efforts to assist the Government of Vietnam in its Public Health Program expanded rapidly. From a level of five Free World health assistance teams operating in selected regional referral hospitals, there is now an assistance team in each of the country's 44 provinces, plus Saigon Prefecture. During the same period, Ministry of Health hospitals expanded their capacity by almost 3,000 beds (15,000 to 18,000) and approximately 50 district, 300 village and 1,000 hamlet level health facilities were added to the government health system. USAID funded the construction of thirty modern surgical suites, eleven major hospital renovation projects, and construction of eight new hospitals, as well as furnishing most of the commodities and medical equipment for the new rural health facilities. U.S. military hospitals have accepted a steadily increasing number of Vietnamese civilian patients, thus adding a significant treatment capability. (See attached summary of hospital workload for 1967-1968, as it relates to Vietnamese civilian war casualties.) During the same period, Vietnamese funding of the public health program increased from 1.96% to 2.95% of the national budget. This included a seven-fold increase in the construction budget. The Ministry of Health's staff, while still undermanned in most categories, increased some twenty percent. Related efforts in the education and training field have produced increases in out-put of health personnel, e.g. physicians up 50% (120 in 1965 to 180 in 1968) and nursing personnel up about 40% (400 in 1965 to 560 in 1968).

The most significant potential for future improvement of Vietnamese health services capabilities lies in the coordination of the civilian and military systems. A program for joint operation and use of hospitals was initiated in thirteen provinces in March with expansion to thirteen additional provinces scheduled within the ensuing six months. It is estimated that this engaged an additional 1,500 Vietnamese military medical personnel in the treatment of civilian as well as military patients. The USAID/Free World assistance effort will continue to reinforce this Vietnamese program with augmentation (primarily in surgery and preventive medicine) and advisory support, as well as selected health facility construction/renovation projects.

	GVN Hospital Admissions						US Military Hospitals				
	All Causes			War Casualties			War Casualties Admissions			Average Beds Occupied By VN Civilians	
	1967	1968	1969	1967	1968	1969	1967	1968	1969	1968	1969
Jan	37,814	34,523	40,550	4,154	5,609	4,338	-	642	749	287	N.A.
Feb	34,053	34,767	36,757	3,920	15,796*	5,450	-	694	899	524	
Mar	41,142	35,870	36,771	4,468	8,645	5,932	-	764	1,141	389	
Apr	36,366	35,971	43,768	3,836	5,867	5,447	131	616	795	421	
May	40,117	39,826	45,104	3,811	8,256	5,678	93	688	878	400	
Jun	41,827	37,886	45,750	3,238	6,647	5,682	136	553	735	461	
Jul	40,101	39,539	49,060	2,900	5,071	4,742	158	559	481	503	
Aug	43,962	39,465	47,626	3,696	5,589	5,007	258	620	850	575	
Sep	42,250	42,130	45,682	4,252	5,695	4,949	263	640	518	675	
Oct	39,765	38,739	44,178	3,690	4,294	3,982	317	583	481	681	
Nov	38,204	37,456	45,067	4,332	4,333	3,[illegible]	281	537	547	751	
Dec	37,539	40,800	n.a.	4,476	4,557	n.a.	314	679	n.a.	806	
	473,140	456,972		46,783	80,359		1,951	7,580			